



Michael O. Leavitt
Governor
Dianne R. Nielson, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Don A. Ostler, P.E.
Director

State of Utah
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY
DIVISION OF WATER QUALITY

288 North 1460 West
P.O. Box 144870
Salt Lake City, Utah 84114-4870
(801) 538-6146
(801) 538-6016 Fax
(801) 536-4414 T.D.D.

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**DIVISION OF
OIL, GAS & MINING**

November 8, 1993

Mr. Wayne Hedberg, Permit Supervisor
Minerals Regulatory Program
Division of Oil, Gas & Mining
3 Triad Center, Suite 350
355 W. North Temple
Salt Lake City, UT 84140-1203

RE: Amended Reclamation Plan, Hecla
Tailing Impoundment M/O 21/004,
Escalante Mine

Dear Mr. Hedberg:

We received a copy of your letter to Hecla Mining Co. dated October 25, 1993 regarding their proposed plan to construct a capillary barrier instead of a clay cap as a means of reclaiming the impoundment area.

Our Consent Agreement with Hecla did not contain specific design objectives for the cap, but it was made on the premise that there would be an effective cap or cover on the pond to effectively exclude precipitation. Therefore, any change to the cap needs to be as effective as the old design. The base of the pond is lined with clay and should the redesigned cap fail to perform as expected, the pond could fill with water and leak high concentrations of cyanide to the ground water.

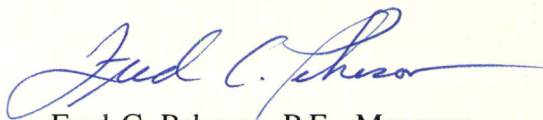
We agree that the redesigned cap with a capillary fringe has obvious benefits that would improve reclamation efforts and may be less costly to construct. An objective of equal importance should be assurances its contents do not become saturated.

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Your proposed tentative approval conditions, which includes an increased thickness for the subsoil, appears to meet our request dated July 14, 1993 in this regard. The new design should be equivalent or better than the original.

If you have questions, contact Mack Croft at 538-6146.

Sincerely,



Fred C. Pehrson, P.E., Manager
Permits, Compliance & Monitoring Branch

FCP:MC:gt

cc: Wayne Thomas
Hecla Mining Co.

P:AMEND.LTR
FILE:HECLA MINING